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DEPT FOR AF/E AND AF A/S FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/14/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)

SUBJECT: Somalia: Alleged Assassination Threat

Classified by Ambassador Michael E. Ranneberger for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: Somalia Transitional Federal Government President Abdullahi Yusuf allegedly told Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles in Addis that he intends to remove Somalia TFG Prime Minister Gedi on October 14 or 15. Meles warned Yusuf against doing so, and told Yusuf to maintain the current TFG leadership to 2009. Ethiopian General Gabre told the Somalia Ambassador to Kenya and Gedi that Yusuf, now allegedly out of options, may try to have Gedi assassinated. See paras 5 and 6 for actions being undertaken. End Summary.

¶2. (S/NF) Somalia Ambassador to Kenya Mohamed Ali Nur ("Americo") told the Ambassador and Special Envoy Yates September 14 that Somalia Transitional Federal (TFG) President Yusuf told Ethiopia Prime Minister Meles that he intends to remove Prime Minister Ali Gedi on October 14 or 15. The Ethiopians allegedly warned Yusuf not to remove Gedi and to maintain the same government through the transition process to 2009. Removing Gedi now, the Ethiopians allegedly said, would destabilize Somalia and completely derail the transition process.

¶3. (S/NF) Americo said Yusuf now has fewer options to remove Gedi legitimately, and there is talk in Mogadishu that Yusuf may move to eliminate Gedi. Americo claimed that General Gabre, the defacto Ethiopian "proconsul" in Mogadishu, called him on September 14 to warn that Yusuf may move to assassinate Gedi. Gabre reportedly claimed that Ethiopian intelligence had picked up the assassination threat, which he also passed directly to Gedi. Consequently, Gedi instructed Americo to inform the Ambassador and Special Envoy. Gedi is currently in Mogadishu and the President will return from Addis Ababa September 14 to Mogadishu.

¶4. (S/NF) Yusuf, Gedi, the Chairman of the National Governance and Reconciliation Committee Ali Mahdi, Speaker of Parliament Madobe, and 240 delegates from the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC) are all scheduled to depart for Saudi Arabia on September 16 for a ceremonial closing event related to the NRC. Americo said he doubts the trip can occur prior to September 17 because the list of who shall attend has not been finalized. The alleged threat of assassination and that Yusuf has not yet returned to Mogadishu, are also likely to postpone or derail the trip to Saudi Arabia. Americo asserted that the escalating tensions between the Prime Minister and President may lead to direct conflict between the Darood and Hawiye clans.

¶5. (S/NF) The Ambassador and Special Envoy thanked Americo for relaying quickly the information above. He stated clearly our interest in having the momentum from the NRC continue with implementation and progress on the transitional tasks. Violence in any form is unacceptable and must be avoided. They emphasized that use of violence by either Yusuf or Gedi would jeopardize their relationship with the U.S. The Ambassador and Special Envoy urged

Americo to counsel the Prime Minister not to overreact to Gabre's alleged assassination threat information. The Ambassador and Special Envoy said that we will ensure our public and private messages make clear to all that political violence is unacceptable. The Ambassador and Special Envoy also asserted they would weigh in with Yusuf to make clear the U.S. position both that violence is not acceptable and that the U.S. will not become embroiled in internal issues regarding ministerial changes.

¶6. (S/NF) We believe it would be useful if Embassy Addis Ababa could approach the Ethiopian government to ascertain the nature of their recent discussions with Yusuf. We would also appreciate any information available from the GOE on Gabre's alleged assassination threat information. We will continue to pass messages to the President and Prime Minister that an outbreak of intra-governmental political violence would seriously limit our ability to engage with the TFG.

RANNEBERGER